

Research on the Reform of “Traditional Chinese Medicine Nursing” Teaching Based on the Concept of Outcome-Based Education

Xueping Peng, Junjie Peng, Shuhua Yang*

The First People’s Hospital of Yunnan Province/Affiliated Hospital of Kunming University of Science and Technology, Kunming 650032, Yunnan Province, China

*Corresponding author: Shuhua Yang, 2324018094@qq.com

Copyright: © 2023 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

Abstract: Continuously evolving teaching concepts and the adoption of diverse teaching methods have led to outcome-oriented education becoming a fundamental focus of teaching reform in colleges and universities. In this article, the “Traditional Chinese Medicine Nursing” course is used as an example to discuss the reform of education based on the concept of outcome-based education, with the purpose of improving students’ learning outcomes and practical skills.

Keywords: Outcome-based education; Traditional Chinese medicine nursing; Integration of theory and practice; Teaching reform

Online publication: September 22, 2023

1. Introduction

In recent years, the role of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) nursing in preventing, treating, and managing have become increasingly prominent in clinical practice. The demand for TCM nursing professionals is on the rise, accompanied by increasing expectations for their qualities. This necessitates the nursing sector to intensify its efforts in training TCM nursing experts^[1]. The National Nursing Development Plan (2021–2025) explicitly emphasizes that the foremost objective in advancing TCM nursing is to enhance the construction of TCM nursing disciplines and elevate clinical practice capabilities. It calls for relevant institutions to intensify their efforts in nurturing TCM nursing professionals^[2].

Much could still be done to improve the training of TCM nurses. Firstly, teachers often prioritize the explanation of theoretical knowledge and assume a dominant role in the teaching process^[3]. Consequently, students tend to engage passively in learning, which hampers the effective enhancement of their overall quality. Secondly, the practical component is more critical. Students have fewer opportunities for practical experience, and the practical content is rather limited and could be better linked to the theoretical knowledge.

These problems are affecting students’ enthusiasm, learning outcomes, and future career development, and

are restricting the cultivation of traditional Chinese medicine nursing talents. The core concept of outcome-based education (OBE) is to be student-centered, outcome-oriented, and constantly improving so that students can achieve expected results in the learning process ^[4]. Compared to traditional educational approaches, the concept of outcome-oriented education offers distinct advantages and holds fundamental value in driving reforms in higher education teaching ^[5]. Consequently, we have restructured TCM nursing education based on this outcome-oriented framework.

2. The nature, tasks, and significance of reform of the “TCM Nursing” course

“TCM Nursing” is an elective course for nursing students and a required course in Chinese medicine nursing. The objective of this course is to nurture medical students capable of adapting to clinical practice, seamlessly integrating into the medical environment, assisting in resolving patients’ health issues, and equipping students with an additional approach to facilitate the patients’ recovery. Through this course, students can master the basic concepts, methods, and techniques of TCM nursing on the basis of understanding basic TCM physiology, pathology, diagnosis, and treatment. It equips them for future roles in TCM nursing within TCM hospitals, community hospitals, and township hospitals, laying a strong foundation.

With the advancement of natural sciences, medical development has shifted from treating diseases to preventing injuries and illnesses, maintaining and improving health, which coincides with the concept of “treating diseases before they occur” in TCM ^[6]. In order to meet society’s demand for TCM nursing talents, it is urgent to reform and innovate the teaching of TCM Nursing.

3. The importance of the outcome-based education concept in the field of education

Spady, an American scholar, initially introduced the concept of outcome-based education in the 1990s. This advanced educational paradigm underscores the planning, execution, and assessment of the educational process with students’ ultimate learning achievements as the primary objective. It accentuates that education should target desired learning outcomes and prioritize the development of students’ practical skills. Outcome-based education has gained increasing recognition in the field of education and has been broadly adopted in the teaching reform across diverse subjects.

Research has shown that applying the concept of outcome-based education in medical schools can effectively improve students’ independent learning abilities, practical application abilities, and scientific research abilities ^[7].

4. Reform measures for TCM Nursing based on the concept of outcome-based education

4.1. Implicit ideological and political education

Ideological and political education in higher education institutions serves as a significant means to fulfill the core mission of nurturing individuals with moral integrity ^[8]. Therefore, it is imperative that ideological and political education permeates the entirety of the classroom teaching process. For instance, during the introductory phase, organizing a reading session of *The Great Doctor’s Sincerity* can facilitate an understanding of medical ethics encapsulated by “the great doctor’s sincerity and medicine as the skill of humanity.” This, in turn, contributes to the continual enhancement of students’ professional ethics and the cultivation of commendable professional attributes. Materia medica can be used to explain the fundamental theories of TCM,

and connect TCM with traditional Chinese culture. This approach effectively ignites students' curiosity and passion for Chinese cultural heritage. When teaching TCM nursing techniques, we delve into the historical development and evolution of each method. This empowers students to adopt a rigorous scientific approach, fostering the progression of TCM nursing. Throughout practical training, students' communication skills and their understanding of compassion and injury are nurtured. This forms a robust foundation for effectively navigating nurse-patient relationships in their future nursing careers.

4.2. Integrating teaching content and modularizing course teaching

TCM Nursing is a professional elective course for nursing undergraduates. Its curriculum encompasses core components such as the fundamental theories of Chinese medicine, Chinese medicine diagnostics, and prescription knowledge. However, due to the limited class hours and the complexity of the content, students often find it challenging to connect with this subject, especially when they are accustomed to thinking in the context of Western medicine. This can lead to a perception that Chinese medicine is somewhat disconnected from their primary field of study. Hence, there is a need to make the theory more transparent and accessible to students, as they can sometimes lose interest in studying Chinese nursing^[9]. The effectiveness of learning TCM Nursing has a direct bearing on the quality of clinical care and significantly influences patient treatment outcomes^[10]. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate teaching content and modularize courses.

First of all, the course content and teaching objectives of TCM Nursing should be well-understood. Then, the main modules of the course should be determined. These modules should be divided according to the knowledge system of TCM nursing. Each module should contain one or more topics and have a certain degree of independence and completeness, such as the basic theory of traditional Chinese medicine, TCM nursing, TCM nursing technology, and TCM healthcare. Then, a detailed teaching plan should be developed according to the modules, including the teaching time of each module, specific teaching activities, and assessment methods. The lessons can then be carried out according to the teaching plan, and evaluation can be carried out at the end of each module so that teachers can understand their students' learning progress and make suitable adjustments.

4.3. Integration of theory and practice, integration of teaching

TCM Nursing involves both theoretical and practical aspects. However, some teachers use the traditional teaching model in the actual teaching process. Students have a certain degree of passivity in mastering theoretical knowledge and operating techniques, making it difficult to effectively cultivate their comprehensive quality^[11]. Therefore, we developed the "Syndrome Differentiation and Nursing Manual." This manual contains the content of each module. Students must complete the corresponding sections as they progress through each module. Students act as patients themselves and apply the knowledge they've acquired to perform differential diagnoses on themselves. They then choose appropriate traditional Chinese medicine interventions based on their diagnostic results. This approach not only helps improve students' health but also enhances their interest in learning and boosts their confidence in TCM.

During the teaching process, we make use of videos, images, and practical demonstrations to visually present relevant knowledge. For example, in the module on appropriate Chinese medicine techniques, we emphasize precautions and methods of application. Students have the opportunity to experience these techniques hands-on, such as *gua sha* (scraping therapy). They witness the use of cupping therapy without the application of color and learn about precautions and techniques involved in the process. Finally, students get to practice these techniques themselves. This integrated approach, combining theory with practical experience, enables students to gain a deeper understanding of theoretical knowledge and enhances their professional skills.

4.4. Improve teaching methods and enrich teaching methods

The theoretical knowledge in the TCM Nursing course is quite complex, and students who have had no prior exposure to traditional Chinese medicine find it challenging. To cater to their needs, we have incorporated various multimedia materials such as video animations, graphics, images, and audio-visual resources. These enrich our teaching methods, making abstract concepts more visual and thus aiding students' comprehension and memory. For practical and challenging tasks like diagnostic techniques (observation, listening and smelling, and questioning) and moxibustion techniques, we have adopted a “teach-demonstrate-practice” approach. We start by explaining the key points, then demonstrate the procedures, and finally, allow students to practice these techniques themselves. Additionally, students have the opportunity to gain clinical experience by participating in hospital rotations. In addition, we utilize the “Rain Classroom” (*Yuketang*) teaching platform to design and deliver classroom activities. This approach optimizes the teaching process, fosters interaction, creates an engaging classroom atmosphere, motivates students, and enhances the overall teaching quality.

4.5. Diversify course assessment and build a scientific assessment system

Influenced by traditional assessment norms, the previous course assessments heavily emphasized theoretical exams, with lab results and day-to-day performance carrying only a minimal weight. This led to an oversight of practical teaching outcomes, as well as students' regular performance, practical skills, innovative thinking, and the application of knowledge in assessments.

To better align with our teaching objectives, this course reform has adopted a diversified approach to course assessment, creating a more scientifically sound evaluation system. Student grades are now composed of three parts: theoretical exams (50%), practical training scores (30%), and regular performance (20%). Regular performance includes attendance records and participation in all classroom activities, which are comprehensively tracked using the *Yuketang* teaching platform. Practical scores are further broken down into categories such as the creativity demonstrated in the “Syndrome Differentiation and Nursing Manual,” proficiency in operational skills, and practical summaries that highlight areas for improvement in the operational process. This comprehensive assessment approach places greater emphasis on evaluating the entire learning process, thereby contributing to an overall enhancement of student capabilities.

5. Conclusion

Based on the outcomes-oriented education philosophy, the teaching reform in TCM Nursing can better cultivate students' practical skills and clinical thinking, ultimately enhancing the quality of education. In the future, we will continue to advance the teaching reform of TCM Nursing, further refining teaching designs, course content, and instructional methods to meet the demands of clinical practice. Additionally, we will focus on students' individual development and holistic growth, contributing to the cultivation of more outstanding TCM nursing professionals.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- [1] Lu X, 2022, The Impact of Introducing Video Teaching Mode in Traditional Chinese Medicine Nursing Teaching on Nursing Students' Theoretical Knowledge and Technical Operation Ability. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, 8(03): 406–408.
- [2] Jian F, He X, Wang F, *et al.*, 2022, Construction of a Clinical Practice Training System for Chinese Medicine Nursing for Undergraduate Nursing Students in Chinese Medicine Colleges. *Chinese Nursing Education*, 19(03): 197–203.
- [3] Tian J, 2022, Investigation and Research on the Current Situation of Chinese Language Teaching in Middle Schools Under the Background of “Suspension of Classes Without Stopping Learning”, dissertation, Central China Normal University. <https://www.doi.org/10.27159/d.cnki.ghzsu.2022.000369>
- [4] Huang M, Nie L, Yin X, *et al.*, 2023, Research on the Theoretical and Practical Integrated Teaching Reform of “Water Analytical Chemistry” Based on the OBE Concept. *Guangzhou Chemical Industry*, 51(08): 212-214.
- [5] Huang Y, Tao G, Wu Y, 2023, Research on the Construction of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Practice Platforms in Local Medical Schools Based on Outcome-Oriented Education. *Journal of Jinzhou Medical University (Social Science Edition)*, 21(04): 18–23 + 41.
- [6] Li L, 2022, Thoughts on the Teaching of Traditional Chinese Medicine Nursing Courses. *Health Vocational Education*, 40(03): 63–65.
- [7] Luo P, Luo Y, Wang Q, *et al.*, 2022, Application of Outcome-Oriented Education in Training Nursing Scientific Research Talents. *Journal of Nursing*, 37(05): 61–64.
- [8] Zhang L, 2023, Exploration of Aesthetic Education in Traditional Chinese Medicine Nursing Teaching. *Chinese Modern Distance Education of Traditional Chinese Medicine*, 21(13): 43-45.
- [9] Zhang H, Yu R, Zheng F, *et al.*, 2022, Exploration and Implementation of Traditional Chinese Medicine Nursing Teaching Based on Chaoxing's “One Level and Three Ends” SPOC teaching model. *Health Vocational Education*, 40(04): 82–84.
- [10] Sun X, 2021, Applying the PBL Teaching Method Based on the WeChat Public Platform in Traditional Chinese Medicine Nursing Practice Teaching. *Chinese Modern Distance Education of Traditional Chinese Medicine*, 19(14): 35–37.
- [11] He H, Wu X, Duan G, *et al.*, 2019, Practical Research on the Talent Training Model of Traditional Chinese Medicine Nursing Positions Based on University Cooperation. *Shanghai Nursing*, 19(03): 68–70.

Publisher's note

Bio-Byword Scientific Publishing remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.